

Consciousness and Wisdom

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In a recent *Scientific American* discussion¹ the philosopher Philip Goff explored the boundary between Galilean math science and consciousness. He found that experimental science looks at things outside-in; but consciousness is elemental experience that looks at things from inside-out. Goff's best effort at harmonizing these two discrete perspectives yields the theory of *panpsychism*.

This philosophical and sociological essay builds on Goff, and considers the emergence of wisdom from primary operational consciousness. Primary consciousness is unmeasurable from within its smallest dimensions. Transcendent wisdom is important to best guide social action. We thereby approach wisdom both from verifiable science and from core consciousness.

Panpsychism is any consciousness that pervades the universe. It is vast and challenges much that is dimensionally experimental. Furthermore, consciousness alone does not explain all action. Wisdom is a subset of consciousness, and less common. Wisdom emerges from local action and high-level consciousness. Random experiences or interactions alone do not generate wisdom. Here is where we launch an examination of emergent wisdom and how it integrates with humans, individually and socially.

Wisdom is more complex than mere operational consciousness. For example, mammals are far more advanced than unicellular forms of conscious life – which are themselves far more advanced than the simple systemic interactions among molecules not involving consciousness.

¹ <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/does-consciousness-pervade-the-universe/>

Within this hierarchy it is impossible to pinpoint exactly where consciousness emerges, nor is it necessary for our discussion. All forms of consciousness involve homeostatic feedback loops. There is always method to the madness, so we are not talking about randomness generating consciousness. At the granular bottom of things the facile theory of quantum randomness is challenged or redefined by systemic dialectics, where a change in quantity can yield a change in quality.

Fairly advanced animals such as dogs, cats, and corvids (ravens and crows) spend much of their waking lives engaging in what appears like a "lower" level of consciousness. When tested using the pursuit of food, these animals can display levels of complex thought. Here is one area where consciousness bumps up against wisdom.

Food is a central aspect of Darwinian "survival of the fittest." You don't find enough to eat, you don't reproduce. When a critical mass of interbreeding individuals doesn't survive, their entire species can be threatened. Except for the very old and seriously ill individuals, each local biome needs to supply enough opportunities for nutritional eating and breeding to keep the distribution of diverse species in balance. If and when national droughts hit disrupted ecosystems as climate relentlessly heats, billions of basic humans could perish just from hunger and thirst.

Gaia is the ancient Greek name for Mother Earth. It signifies how the living Earth is a self-regulating, conscious organism. This Greek mythological concept says Gaia is the daughter of Chaos. How ironic it is that we moderns with our Anthropocene vanity are now becoming even more chaotic than Chaos.

When climate change is radical, and local biomes are degraded and fragmented, many defenseless species cannot maintain their viability. Enough of this type of change eventually leads to very threatening feedback loops for nearly all higher species. Carried to its extreme, accelerating vector climate change will annihilate higher consciousness on Earth. Only some smart cephalopod

species in the deep ocean would surely survive the worst of our actions.

Given that emergent dialectics describes all levels of higher consciousness, it is proper to consider the emergence of the top level, wisdom, on Earth's surface. It is important to note that any type of highly intelligent organism is not automatically protected by its big brain alone from systemic Darwinian pressures.

Just as physics needs an objective foundation, so too does consciousness. Mystical ultimate reality may exist, but it is unprovable, despite what Bronze Age religious texts claim. We can still do a lot with various levels of provisional provability, even while allowing for the forever unprovable. The lesser cannot deductively envelop the greater; but the greater can envelop the lesser. In brief, both our induction and deduction are flawed from a purist universal perspective – but our basic deduction often is enough to help us get by within the immediate everyday world.

At the very bottom of physics AND consciousness are the incredibly small (mass/energy) *yin/yang particles*. Fundamental reality is not composed of General Relativity geometry. Nor is it composed of completely random quanta, or quantum waves, or ether. There are particle-bead waves that can be described.

Through Coulombic electromagnetism, push/shadow gravity, and dialectically emergent interactions, the multiverse's yin/yang particles in their vast numbers and combinations produce that which we know as Reality. There are additional virtually granular elements of reality to supplement the grand picture, but we finite creatures can never have sufficiently powerful engineering tools to allow for universal deduction. Science and philosophy employ astrophysical workarounds to try to arrive at cosmological truths.

Within this mass/energy viewpoint consciousness operationally emerges from dialectical combinations of yin/yang particles. Thus, the foundational perspective of matter/energy collections helps us understand the vast universe. What we learn from

physics helps us understand the very smallest dimensions. Experimentalism isn't the path to or from ideal omniscience, but is one methodology that helps existential wisdom emerge.

At this critical time in the history of humanity we need all the authentic wisdom we can find and harness. The real battle is not between wisdom and ignorance. It is between different reward systems. The wisest among us can think and act both for the short-term and long-term benefit of all residents across the thin layer of life atop this blue planet. Nevertheless, there are very strong reward systems within our industrialized primate species for only short-term profits and power; contrary to the long-term ecological good for us all. Who or what will win this battle?

Armageddon theory envisions a global war between the angels and the demons. The rest of this Anthropocene century appears to be shaping up as the critical beginnings of a great struggle for the very existence of beauty and wisdom in Gaia's biosphere. On the side of chaos are the lawless politicians and their confused followers who believe they are always right. On the other side will be a much smaller, but growing, number of angelic globalists.

As of 2020, the world's venal wizards and their many minions seem to have the upper hand.² It is as if a melanoma cancer has been detected growing on our skin, but now is not a "convenient time" to interfere with all the fun we are having. I am by nature an optimistic individual, but I am not very optimistic regarding how this benighted 21st century is starting to unfold. Time is of the essence. The terminal stages of untreated personal or global cancers are always horrible.

A study of how the human social brain has evolved offers both concern and hope.³ On the one hand, early humans learned to respond only to immediate threats, discounting remote threats.

² <http://astronomy-links.net/Unforeseen.Extinction.pdf>

³ <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20190304-human-evolution-means-we-can-tackle-climate-change>

On the other hand, humans are able to think about the future, and to operate proactively in social units. Casting our rescue strategies inside a more positive social framework helps. Wise remediation will take note of both tendencies in the human brain.

The fate of many billions of totally innocent, highly conscious creatures will depend on the accelerating conflict between myopic humans who enjoy slash-and-burn greed, and defenders of ecosystem homeostasis. Media-manipulating politicians and their carbon-polluting puppet masters now are working to destroy the precious global beauty we have always taken for granted. At stake is the real Eden that has accumulated only on Earth over millions of years.

Do we stakeholders love our only planetary home enough to wisely prevent in a timely fashion Gaia's Eden from being rudely transformed into a brown necropolis of destroyed high-level consciousness and wisdom?

I don't existentially care if there are panpsychic, pre-industrial, high-level beings peacefully enjoying life and wisdom on their home planet a hundred light-speed years away.

The accelerating existential threat here on Earth is now upon us. For the sake of our uniquely precious species, and for the sake of millions of other innocent conscious species, no challenge before us matters more.